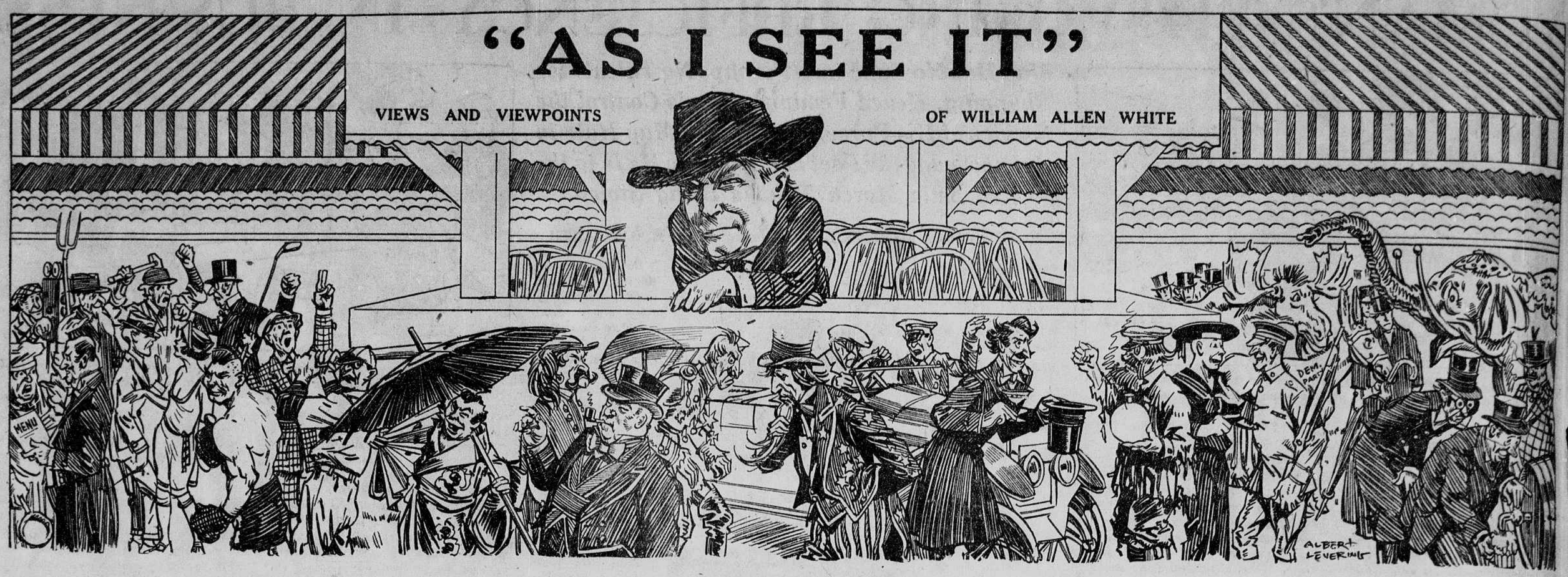
"AS I SEE IT"

VIEWS AND VIEWPOINTS OF WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE



Biology in Politics

POLITICS is supposed to be a dull and dirty game, a scramble for place and power. So it is if one views it only from day to day and from month to month. But considered from decade to decade, from generation to generation, the dull and dirty game begins to assume a large form. It appears as a current in human affairs. Upon the waves movements ride and ideas translate themselves significantly. Tides are visible. Cross currents bite into the flood and then slowly turn the tide to a new direction. It seems curiously mad—the whole rush and crash and twisting torrent, even when it looms with the passing of generations. Yet it is translatable into fairly simple terms. Politics seen in the large is the turmoil between ideas so great that men in the mass may not state them simply; so large that men wrestle only over the surface outcroppings of the deeply buried hulks of truth that move in the under consciousness of mankind.

For thirty years—possibly for fifty—the politics of the world has been moved by a theory of biologists, who held that environment was more important than heredity in determining the character of a living creature. So all over the world political parties have been organized to affect the environment of humanity. The Liberal in England, the Continental Socialist, the American Progressives, the whole kit and ka-boodle of uplifters, reformers, corn dancers and idealists have been bent on redistributing the gross income of mankind so that the average man could live in better houses than ever before, eat more white bread and meat, wear better clothes, read more books, work shorter hours, ride in grander carriages, both public and private, and generally kick up more dust as he passed through his worldly pigrimage than the average man ever had produced in the world before.

Universal education came to the world. Parties rose and fell. Politicians lied like Ananias. Demagogues appeared, promised the voters the moon with plum jam on it and sold out or faded out or really chipped off here and there a chunk of the moon.

And all because pale, cloistered scientists fifty or seventy-five years ago decided that environment was important in the human equation.

Now the theory of environment is giving way to the theory that heredity is the governing cause in man's welfare and happiness. In "The Century Magazine" a debate is going on between Albert Wiggam, a biologist, and Bernard Shaw upon the relative importance of heredity and environment. Books are cascading out of the presses upholding the theory of heredity. Soon the controversy will have its political statement, and then bang! will go the old parties of the world and new issues will come. New liars will appear. Fresh spasms of yearnings for the unattainable will rock our public institutions and we shall compromise on the attainable and be happy. And all because a group of biologists examining a multitude of microscopic exhibits tucked safely under coverslips on little glass slides have agreed that life cells transmit characteristics immutably and that our fates are in our blood.

The people won't know this. The politicians won't even dream of it. But the angels who watch our destinies and keep the sluices open in the irrigation ditches of life that we call the moving tides of long events—these angels will know the truth and get their compensatory smiles from the knowledge.

"She was a discreet and innocent woman," protested the friend of a lady who was bedecking the first pages of our newspapers the other day. How often, indeed, is discretion the better part of innocence in these hectic times?

An Old Timer Gone

EVER since men first collected in villages and brought their horses and cows and sheep with them, men have come in from the country hay lands selling hay. The hay market is almost as old as the wheel in the life of man. In every American town since the white man settled on the continent some side street has been devoted to the countryman who came to town with a load of hay. This countryman has been the subject of personal paragraphs in the local newspaper for 200 years. He is a news source for reporters who want to know about crop conditions. The load of hay is the symbol of commerce between the town and the country and the hay market was the common meeting place of agriculture and business.

And without due notice in writing the hay market has gone. And with its going an ancient institution has disappeared.

The horse has gone from the town. The cow has disappeared. The automobile refuses hay and the truck chews no cud. So an institution as old as Nineveh and Tyre, a meeting place of urbanity and rusticity, suddenly has been wiped off the map of civilization. Some one should erect on the windy, shabby side street where the hay market once stood a commemorative tablet:

"Here, for 10,000 years and more, men bought hay. Here the honest farmer, with rocks in his load, and the sturdy citizen, who lied about his need of hay, met and gently tried to cut each other's throats, and now the auto dealer skins them both. And so the old order changeth lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

Four hundred thousand dollars is the sum which one of our gentleman bruisers has offered to another gentleman bruiser if the second gentleman will stand up in a prize ring and let the first bruiser beat him up. It looks like easy money. But all easy money is hard. If you doubt it, ask the man who married it.

The Snail

A MONTH ago Senator Borah, who is one of the wisest and most capable of our Senators, introduced a bill in Congress providing for a United States Coal Commission, to be appointed by the President, consisting of three persons—a man selected by the coal mine owners, a man selected by the coal miners and a third man, who shall in no way be connected with the coal business. This commission was to be a fact-finding commission to tell the people of the United States what is wrong with the coal industry that it should be a battle ground year after year in the midst of the nation, where warring industrial forces have cluttered up the road of commerce. The commission was to be empowered to get the facts and then to recommend to the nation five specific things: First, a plan for standardizing the mines upon a basis of their productive capacity and closing mines falling below the standard; second, standardizing the cost of living and living conditions for mine workers; third, standardizing some basis of arriving at a reasonable cost for the overhead in producing and delivering coal to the consumer; fourth, the advisability or inadvisability of nationalizing the coal industry, and, fifth, the feasibility of governmental regulation. Surely, these were not radical requests. Without the facts about the industry, and exactly such facts as the commission should find, how is the nation to know the truth about coal? Two weeks ago the President in his message asked for the passage of such a bill. The public is eager for the truth. Congress could pass that legislation in five days if Congress cared to. But it is still in the hands of the Senate Committee on Education. That committee is composed of Senator Sterling, of South Dakota; Senator Phipps, of Colorado; Senator Warren, of Wyoming; Senator Shortridge, of California; Senator Du Pont, of Delaware; Senator Jones, of New Mexico; Senator McKellar, of Tennessee; Senator Walsh, of Massachusetts; Senator Caraway, of Arkansas, and Senator Rawson, of Iowa.

And it has not done a blessed thing to report the bill out. "And for why?" asks the untutored mind of the man in the street. If ever there was an emergency in government, it is here. Yet this hard-boiled committee, sitting on the edge of the volcano, chucks the peanut shells of its specious excuses into the crater and waits for the fireworks. There is nothing like a free government to develop the tryranny that tries men's souls.

Mr. A. Busch, brewer emeritus, is talking a lot about the sale of booze upon American ships. By lining up with the distillers in every fight on prohibition for twenty years the American brewers talked the land into prohibition. If Mr. Busch will just keep it up, he may get prohibition into the sea and make the mighty ocean like the pleasant land.

The Fiddler's Bill

THE two strikes in fuel and transportation which dislocated American commerce this summer cost the strikers millions in wages. But that was only the first cost of the strikes. They cost the owners of the railroads and mines millions in profits. The millions in profits and wages were still but a small percentage of the cost of the strikes. Farmers who lost perishable products paid millions more. Grain growers whose market was broken by the lack of transportation, laborers whose day's work was reduced because of shortage in fuel and transportation lost millions more. And consumers of hundreds of necessary articles who paid the tax imposed by paralyzed industry upon commerce will lose millions more, and that tax will be collected all fall and far into the winter.

Well could we as American citizens have put up the strikers and their families at the best hotels in their towns and paid their board if they had gone on working. The fiddler's bill for these strikes is a tax that no man can escape. Every one pays it. And the public interest in these industrial quarrels makes them public matters. The strike in industry is not a private affair. It must come under public control. The worker and his master have no right to brawl at the public expense. We are a smart people, we Americans, and we could solve this problem if we would only think about it. But when we think we are thinking about it we are merely trying to rationalize our prejudices; trying to make our set and confirmed beliefs justify some theory. Until we abandon our prejudices and begin honestly inquiring for the truth, for some really sensible, new and possibly revolutionary but workable way to settle this jangle, the fiddler will keep bringing in one bill after another for these fool industrial jazz dances until we are bankrupt and civilization is gone to pot.

With all these marvels of science that are thrilling the human race these days, it will be difficult to write a new Bible for any new cult. No one lives with imagination to think up any marvel that would be considered a miracle.

Sugar

THE tariff is always a back scratcher. For giving the sheepmen the right to rob us on wool the sheepmen give the beet sugar men a right to rob us, and the beet sugar men give the farmers a right to take theirs, and the farmers help the cotton mill owners to gouge us, and they in turn help the dyemakers to hold us up and they all turn their backs while the lumbermen turn our pockets wrong side out. If just one robber could be dragged out of the conspiracy it would fail to get enough votes to be effective.

The sugar tariff is the most indefensible larceny on the list. Why should not the American people begin trying to kick out that stone of the arch of the home of forty thieves? A generation ago we had a lot of "sugar Senators," and their iniquity brought about the direct election of United States Senators. Surely, sugar is as sweet as it ever was, and surely the sugar Senators to-day are as brazen as their predecessors. Why not take a shot at them? This is the open season. This is the time to shoot the pianist who really is doing his worst.

Recalling a certain scrap of paper eight years ago, it may be well to remember that to-day it takes more than a thousand German marks to make a dollar.

THE SCHOOL OF AUCTION BRIDGE

By R. F. FOSTER

SINCE the article published two weeks ago on discarding one or two have written to ask how one is to know that the partner has the jack or queen when you have one of those cards and can stop the suit between you. Suppose you cannot stop it?

You do not know, but you do know that unless your partner has as good as the queen when you have three to the jack, there is nothing you can do to stop that suit when the declarer starts leading it. Then, they ask, why not have thrown away the weak suit if it was useless, anyhow?

Correct. But when the declarer starts in on the suit that you find you could not stop anyway and you have only two cards of it, you will have to discard, and your discard comes down to your good suit, so that you do not make all the tricks in it, after all.

A player in Pennsylvania who was much interested in the weak or strong discard controversy at the time it raged some years ago sent me an analysis of fifty deals in which this jack in one hand, queen in the other, either twice guarded, was the situation, and he found that discarding from the weak suit, in the hope of making all the tricks in a better suit, cost about eighty tricks more than it gained. Apart from the times when the strong discard would have saved a valuable stopper in a weak suit, there were occasions when the partner had the strong suit in, as the only trick in the weak suit had been thrown away, or, that the strong suit had to be discarded from, anyway.

The deal diagramed in the second column illustrates the temptation to take a chance on getting in a big suit, and also shows the importance of the declarer's trying to coax discards in a suit which he conceals in his own hand.

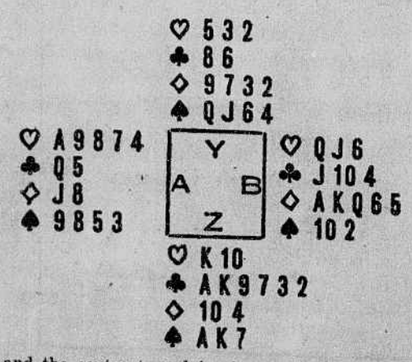
Z dealt and bid no-trump. B cannot ask for a lead, as his suit precludes any chance of the declarer's returning to no-trump, so he says nothing. A leads a small heart and sets up the suit at once, Z's king being forced immediately.

On looking over the situation, Z knows that it is impossible to catch the queen, jack, ten of clubs in two leads, no matter how those cards lie. If he catches both queen and jack in one hand, the other adversary must have three to the ten. He cannot duck the first round, as that will let in all the hearts and diamonds.

The prospect of losing a club, four heart tricks and four or five diamonds it not pleasant, so Z proceeds to save what he can from the wreck by making his four spades. These, with his two club tricks and the heart trick already won, is his contract, and that is something to be thankful for. Accordingly he leads out the spades, ace and king first.

On the third spade B is presented with the opportunity to make a reverse discard in diastead of that he imagines he can show his strong suit just as well by discarding his weak monds, letting go the six and the five, but in one, so he sheds a club, and then one of his hearts, keeping the queen to return.

The jig being up, apparently, dummy leads the clubs to make the two tricks in that suit



and the contract, and is pleasantly surprised to find that he has been presented with four more club tricks than he had any right to. Meanwhile B is obliged to discard four diamonds, when two would have been enough.

The result is that Z makes four by cards, when all he was entitled to would have been the odd trick. B would have made his three diamonds, and he could not have made any more, because dummy would have stopped him on the fourth round, after he got in with the club jack; but his partner would have would have made his hearts.

A hand was played in London in the old bridge days in which the player on dummy's left hand had to make five discards, and he held on to three spades to the ten and let go four honors in clubs. He was rewarded by finding his partner with the queen, jack of his ten-high suit, which saved the game.

There are so many hands, of course, in which it is perfectly useless to keep a suit, such as three to a seven, unless it is very likely that it may be useful to lead later. It is seldom wise to discard all of a suit, however weak, as it betrays the partner's holding to the declarer the moment the suit is led and one adversary renounces. Many a game has been lost through this fault.

This is the solution of Problem No. 120, in which hearts were trumps, Z to lead and Y-Z to win all the tricks.

Z starts with the ace of spades, upon which Y must discard the ten of diamonds. Z then leads a small diamond, which Y wins with the king, leading the trump. On this Y discards the four of clubs.

If B discards a club, A must protect that suit by shedding one of his queens. If B keeps both his clubs, he must unguard the diamond, and as Y has unblocked that suit Z can overtake the six.

If Y does not play the ten of diamonds to the first trick, A can throw away the queen later, as B will not cover the ten and Z cannot afford to win it.

Queries and Answers

AUCTION BRIDGE

Question: The declarer holds the two best clubs and a losing heart at the end of a no-trumper. B, on his right, has the top heart and two good spades. Knowing A has a heart to lead, and it being A's lead, B throws down his cards and claims the rest of the tricks. A has two losing clubs, but does not expose his cards. What can the declarer do? C. M.

Answer: There is nothing in the laws about the adversaries claiming the rest of the tricks; and the case in question is out of range of law 51f, which requires B to have played to the twelfth trick. It is useless to call B's cards, as A cannot be prevented from leading the heart.

Question: Z has called two suits, spades and then hearts, both overcalled by no-trumps. What should Y lead, holding only one spade, four small hearts, four small diamonds, and four clubs to the ace jack? B. K. L.

Answer: Although the spade was the original call, that suit can be led once only, and with at least nine hearts between the two hands, the heart seems the better opening.

Question: Z deals and passes, At what stage of the bidding should he say anything if A passes, Y says a heart, B doubles, and A, two clubs. Y goes on to two hearts, the doubler to three clubs. Z holds three small hearts Y, one club, four diamonds to the queen, and five spades to the ten. Z passed the three clubs, and Y went to three hearts; B to four clubs. Should Z now go to four hearts, or should he have overcalled three clubs on the previous round? G. R. O.

Answer: The ability to trump clubs, would suggest a call of three hearts over three clubs, and certainly four hearts.

Question: The dealer bets his partner should have left him alone when he started with a two-no-trump bid, although he held seven hearts to four honors, two small diamonds, three small spades, and a club. The dealer had four aces and three kings. The partner bid three hearts. P. R.

Answer: The take-out should be four hearts. If the dealer has the singleton ace of hearts, the suit may never make at no-trump. Even 100 aces is not as good, because not as safe, as seventy-two honors in hearts; in this case eighty.

EUCHRE

Question: In a summer-resort game for charity, there were three valuable prizes. A had won fourteen games, B and C thirteen each, and D twelve. The committee decided that B and C cut for the second prize and D take the third. C lost the cut, and then protested D's taking third prize. The committee decided that the protest was too late. What should have been done? Mrs. G.

Answer: If there were three prizes for the three top scores, D was never in it, as there were three better scores made. The cut should have been to deside on the choice of prizes as between B and C. While C should have pointed this out earlier, if the committee did not see the justice of it, their decision would probably have been the same, and they have the final say.

POKER

Question: Playing with the joker, fifty-three cards, A bets that as that card can be called anything, it can be used to connect the ace with the tray in a round-the-corner straight. W. H. J.

Answer: The joker can be used only to form a part of a regular poker hand, and unless it is agreed to play round-the-corner straights all through the game, the joker cannot be so used.

RUSSIAN BANK

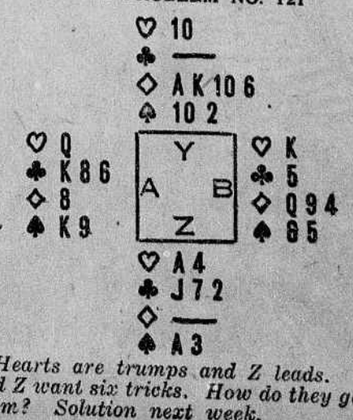
Question—In playing with one pack can a sequence be reversed at any time the player wishes?—N. L.

Answer—There must be a vacant space into which the cards can be played in the process of reversing. That is the only condition.

Question—A insists that if a card is shifted in such a manner as to expose a card playable on the foundations, and there is another, also playable, the one must be played that will continue the play. This is what happened. The trey of clubs went on the two. The ace of diamonds was turned, and the deuce from the stock released the trey on the tableau and also the trey on the stock. A bets that as the trey on the tableau will release the four of clubs, to continue that foundations it is the diamond that must be played.—J. C.

Answer—The player may use whichever he pleases. As long as he plays one [illegible] be stopped.

BRIDGE PROBLEM NO. 121



Hearts are trumps and Z leads. Y and Z want six tricks. How do they get them? Solution next week.